

# Proposed county budget released

by Cindy Glasson

The Hot Springs County Commissioners held a final budget meeting last Friday to make the necessary amendments to balance the budget for the last fiscal year.

Some of the line items from various departments had overruns on their budget, however, they also had line items in those same departments that were lower than anticipated, allowing the commissioners to juggle funds from one line to another and still come out with a balanced budget.

There was one amendment that had to be made covering the jail and emergency expenditures, however, but the funds, \$119,112.15,

were available from the unencumbered funds line.

The commissioners have released their proposed 2018-2019 budget which will be voted on for full approval on July 16 at noon.

Most of the departments that rely on the general fund are getting slight increases in their budgets, anywhere from \$600 to \$6,000, however, there are some that are getting larger jumps such as the clerks office, which will be receiving an additional \$10,600 along with the elections department that will get \$35,300 to cover expenses during this election year.

The sheriff's department will see an \$18,000 increase and the jail jumps \$21,600. The mu-

seum will be getting \$15,000 more than last year and the airport gets an additional \$25,676.

Entities receiving higher payouts compared to those receiving lower amounts is split almost 50-50 with the fairgrounds capital improvement line hauling in an additional \$200,000 over last year.

There are always grants to apply for or grant payments to be made and this year is no different. In all, \$153,774 more in grant monies are expected for the coming year.

Of course, some changes may still come before final approval, but at this point, the 2018-2019 budget looks to be just shy of \$1.6 million more than last year.



photo by Mark Dykes

## Taking the stage

Oliver Strenger shows his dance moves during the Summer Reading talent show last Friday at Hot Springs County Library. The summer program theme this year is "Libraries Rock!" with activities centered around music and motion. Though there was no program this week due to the holiday, the program will wrap up next Friday, July 13.

# Messenger receives award

by Mark Dykes

Local attorney Michael Messenger was presented with the Lifetime Achievement Award at the Wyoming Trial Lawyers Association convention in Cody on June 21.

Messenger is finishing his 43rd year as a practicing attorney, all of which have been in Thermopolis as he came here during the Pageant Day weekend in 1975. Except for four years as the Hot Springs County and prosecuting attorney from 1978-82, he said, he's "always been on the criminal defense side of that part of the law." Otherwise, he's been in civil litigation and general practice. He was appointed as the attorney for town council in 1986.

Messenger obtained his law degree from the University of Wyoming in 1975, and had several job opportunities but also a strong desire to come back to the Big Horn Basin without being too close to Cody, and Louis Walwrath offered him an associate position. During his time in the office, he estimated he's mentored close to 40 attorneys.

Though he knew he'd been nominated for the lifetime award, Messenger said it as a "complete surprise. I did not know it



Attorney Mike Messenger with his Lifetime Achievement Award.

was going to happen." He has since learned Bobbi Overfield and Marcia Shanor, executive director of the Wyoming Trial Lawyers Association, spoke to Colin Simpson, president of the association who has the authority to select an award recipient if he chooses.

At the convention, he knew something was up when he saw his three secretaries at the luncheon and he was directed to a reserved table; family members also were there to help celebrate. Several people spoke of Messenger at the ceremony and he said, "I didn't realize I was such a nice guy."

It being a lifetime award, Messenger clarified he's not looking to retire any time soon.

Messenger has served on the association board or on the past president's board since 1977, was president from 1984-85, and has been very active in board activities in that time.

Outside of his practice, Messenger enjoys hunting and fishing, working on his farm, travelling, reading and doing fun things with his son, daughter and grandkids. He said Thermopolis has been good to him and his family, and the service they've provided has been very fulfilling.



courtesy photo

## Dangerous trip

Hot Springs County Search and Rescue helped a few people out of the Bighorn river that tangled with the Sixth Street bridge. Though flows have decreased, it is still not advised to float or boat the river.

# Patriotic light show

The Thermopolis Volunteer Fire Department will do their annual fireworks show at dark on Wednesday, July 4 from T-Hill, but if you are looking for a little something different to watch on the Fourth of July and a few days afterward, stop up at the Thermopolis Volunteer Fire Department between 9:30 p.m. and 10:30 p.m. from July 1-7.

Tune your radio in your vehicle to 97.3 FM, then sit back and enjoy a synchronized, patriotic light show.

There will be three tunes, "God Bless the USA," "Where the Stars and Stripes" and "Made in America," with the lights moving in time with the songs.

Presented by Bishop Family Lights, the project has been in the works since May, creating the props and mechanisms to synchronize the lights.

People with their own fireworks will be able to set them off near the skate park prior to the T-Hill fireworks show.

The Sounds of Summer concert series will be presenting Hamilton Loomis and special guest DJ Haley at the pavilion in Hot Springs State Park on Wednesday, July 4 at 7 p.m.